Is JESUS in the Godhead or Is the Godhead in JESUS?

BY GORDON MAGEE

Is Jesus in the Godhead or Is the Godhead in Jesus

by Gordon Magee

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The author of this booklet was used of God to pioneer the Oneness revelation in the British Isles. His ministry was particularly fruitful in Ireland, and upon his departure from that land the ministers presented him with the following beautiful address of appreciation:

The Churches of God in Ireland

Gordon Magee

On the occasion of your departure from these shores We affix to this address our sincere and best wishes for your future

Words are feeble effectless indeed to express our indebtedness but the establishment of several Churches of God and the testimony of over twelve hundred baptised in Jesus Name coupled with hundreds who repented and were sealed by the Holy Spirit are tangible proofs of the influence exerted by you

You will be remembered in the Churches of God as long as they remain You have behind you many preachers dedicated to propagating the truths introduced by you

As you depart from your native Ireland we trust that this knowledge may be a satisfying source for your apostolic labours and when Jesus comes may you receive the prize for which you have so earnestly laboured

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Foreword

"Whom do men say that I am?"

From the lips of our Lord Jesus came this pertinent query. The question was important then; it is important today!

This treatment of the identity of the Christ is brief but informative; it is scriptural and clear; it is theological, yet beautiful in simplicity; it digs into the numerous perplexities of trinitarian interpretations; and it burns with the revelation of the oneness of God.

The author, Gordon Magee, has armed the Apostolic Oneness movement with a treatise that answers questions of tritheistic opposition, secures the believer with a rock-like foundation, and makes Jesus Christ wholly, solely, truly, fully, altogether and exclusively God.

This book belongs in every Bible believer's library, and its contents should be etched indelibly in every Christian's heart. I thrill to its blessed truth every time I read the grand message it reveals.

Nathaniel A. Urshan

1
The Dual Nature of Jesus Christ

*L*et us read I Timothy 3:16 carefully:

And without controversy great is the mystery of the Holy Trinity. God was manifested in three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

One would almost think that it reads that way, to hear some folks talk. This is how it actually reads:

And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh.

The Bible, in its entire sixty-six books, knows nothing at all about a mysterious three-person Godhead. The great mystery of godliness is the Incarnation—God manifest in the flesh.

The Humanity of Jesus

The Scriptures provide multiple proofs of the genuine humanity of our Lord Jesus Christ. Let us examine a few of them, and in doing so we will find that this composite word

portrays the Lord Jesus as having a genuine human nature.

"He was . . . an hungred" (Matthew 4:2). The Lord experienced the same genuine pangs of physical hunger which grip our bodies when we have been without food. He was human enough to be hungry.

"But he was asleep" (Matthew 8:24). The same sensation of oblivion that comes to our eyelids, which we call sleep, was experienced by the Lord Jesus Christ—another proof of His genuine humanity.

"Jesus therefore, being wearied with his journey, sat thus on the well" (John 4:6). If He overexerted Himself, so actual was His humanity that the same weariness which enters our limbs when we have overexerted ourselves came also to Him. He was genuinely human in every aspect and in every detail.

"Jesus wept" (John 11:35). He was human enough to weep in a tempestuous emotional moment.

"And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly" (Luke 22:44). Jesus knew what it was to have degrees of earnestness. There was never a time in Christ's experience when He was not earnest. He was ever and always earnest—but the Bible teaches us that He knew degrees of earnestness just as we do. Sometimes we pray and we are intensely earnest. Other times we pray and we are earnest, but not so much as before. That is because we are human. It is quite impossible for us to live in the same elevated emotional plane all the time. We experience fluctuating degrees of earnestness. Jesus was the same—He was human.

Perhaps the greatest proof of His humanity is found in Luke 2:52: "And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature." "Jesus increased in . . . stature" means that He was subject to the same physical laws of growth and development as we are. "Jesus increased in wisdom" means that He was learning, acquiring knowledge and wisdom. He was not only subject to the same laws of physical growth and development as we are but also to the same laws of mental development as all human beings are. Jesus was absolutely and genuinely human. I Corinthians 15:3

says, “Christ died.” Need we say more to prove His true human nature?

Jesus Was a Man

When the apostles preached about Jesus they proclaimed that He was a man. “Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles” (Acts 2:22). When Jesus spoke of Himself He declared that He was a man. To the Jews who had murder in their hearts Jesus said, “But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth” (John 8:40). Now when we hear it from Christ’s own lips, we must believe it. There can be no doubt at all about the humanity of the Lord Jesus Christ, for the Bible teaches it too plainly.

This Man Was Also God

But it is not enough to say that Jesus was a man. There is no lie as dangerous as a half-truth, and it is only a half-truth about Jesus to maintain that He was a man. If someone says that He was a man and that is all he has to say about Him, then he has told a lie about Him. Here is the profound yet simple truth: This man was also God, and He was as genuinely God as He was genuinely man.

This truth is illustrated by the occasion when His parents lost Him. After visiting Jerusalem, on their way back home they discovered that Jesus was not with them. They doubled back and went to the temple, seeking the missing twelve-year-old Jesus. Luke 2:46 describes it thus: “And it came to pass, that after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions.”

If we had been alive at the time when Luke had written his gospel story, and if we had gone to Luke and said, “Tell us, please, Dr. Luke, whom did Joseph and Mary find that day in

the temple?" then he would have said, "Why, they found the twelve-year-old boy Jesus."

But another voice has also spoken—the Old Testament prophet Malachi—and he has told us who was found in the temple that day: "Behold, I will send my messenger [John the Baptist], and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple" (Malachi 3:1).

Malachi said that the twelve-year-old growing boy found in the temple was none other than Jehovah Himself. That is a wonderful thought! That ornate temple, that beautiful magnificent temple, actually belonged to a twelve-year-old boy sitting in the midst of those learned doctors, hearing them and asking them questions. Great is the mystery of godliness! How could this boy be Jehovah? I cannot fully understand it, but I believe it because the Scriptures declare it to be so.

The Lord of Glory

The apostle Paul wrote about the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus in I Corinthians 2:8: "Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory." Paul, whom did you say they crucified? "The Lord of glory." That title is different from what Pontius Pilate said in John 19:5: "Behold the man!" As far as Pilate was concerned, he was committing a man to be crucified—a good man, yes, the best man he had ever met, but a man for all that. So there can be no doubt about the humanity of the One delivered into the hands of Pilate to die. But Paul still maintained that this man was the Lord of glory.

Just who is the Lord of glory? "Who is this King of glory? The LORD strong and mighty, the LORD mighty in battle" (Psalm 24:8). Here is an incredible and profound thought. The man who was put to death in weakness was Jehovah, strong and mighty. Great is the mystery of godliness. How could that person hanging on a central cross, writhing in death agonies, be

the Lord of glory and the Lord of life? I cannot explain it, but I believe it with all my heart. It is a mystery, a blessed mystery, a thrilling mystery—God manifested in the flesh!

John the Baptist

Let us suppose that we had talked with John the Baptist in his day and asked him, "John, tell us, please, did not you have an unusual baptismal service today? Isn't it true that a heavenly voice spoke and a supernatural form like a dove alighted upon one of your candidates today—did not that happen? Who was that person, John?"

John would have answered, "That was my cousin, Jesus. He was born just a few months after me."

"John, is that all? Is that all you have to say about this person who had such a remarkable water baptism? Can't you tell us just a little bit more? We feel that there is more to Him than that He is simply your cousin."

John would have said, "I'll tell you. Turn with me to the scroll of the prophet Isaiah. 'The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the LORD' (Isaiah 40:3). That is referring to me. Here Isaiah was talking about me centuries ago. I am the voice, my church is the wilderness, and I have been preaching in preparation for the advent of Jehovah!"

Isaiah 40:9 says, "Lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God!" The Baptist would have said to us, "I cannot explain it. I know that He is my cousin. I know that according to the flesh we are related, but He is also my God. He is also my Jehovah, for whom I have come in blessed preparation. He came after me, but yet in some wonderful way He was before me—He is God manifested in the flesh! It is a great mystery. It is the mystery of godliness!"

The Bible teaches us that the man Christ Jesus is also the eternal God!

God Over All

This truth is summed up in Romans 9:5. Here it is in the compass of a single verse of Scripture: "Of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever." This verse tells us that Jesus was flesh and that at the same time He was God over all, blessed for ever. That should settle any controversy over Christ's deity for all time.

Jesus Was Both God and Man

Some may say to me, "Brother Magee, what happened at the Incarnation, at Christ's physical birth? You say great is the mystery of godliness. Cannot you help us a little more and tell us what happened at our Lord's human incarnation or birth?" Philippians 2:6 is helpful in this respect: "Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God." In other words, before Jesus was born with His human nature He was the invisible God. He was in the form of God, but He "took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men" (Philippians 2:7). At His incarnation God took upon Himself the likeness of men. He assumed human nature at His incarnation but did not cease to be God. Now, in addition to what He always was (Jehovah God), He was in possession of an assumed human nature.

This explains the Jesus of the Bible fully and comprehensively. All we have to do when we read our Bibles is to keep in mind this simple thought: Is Jesus acting as a man now or is He acting as God? Is Jesus speaking as a man here or is He speaking as God?—because He was both God and man. In Him deity and humanity were fused but not confused. He could speak from two separate standpoints. He could talk as almighty God—He could talk as a human. He could act as almighty God—He could act as a human. For instance, when He walked on the sea He was acting as God. When He walked beside the sea He was acting as man. When He sat down on the wall and

was weary in every limb, He was weary as to His humanity, but Isaiah 40:28 says that the everlasting God—the Creator—faints not nor is weary. Jesus was not weary as to His deity; He was weary merely as to His humanity.

To understand what a scriptural passage says about Jesus, then, we must ask the question, Is He now taking the part and place of God or is He taking the part and place of man? There we have a wonderful key, an unfolding key to the Jesus of the four Gospels.

"I and My Father Are One"

Let us look at a few examples. In John 10:30 Jesus said, "I and my Father are two"? I beg your pardon! That is not right! He said, "I and my Father are one."

The very construction of this verse of Scripture is important. Jesus did not say, "My Father and I are one." I would not talk the way He did about God. I would not dare to say, "Me and God," or "I and the Father," when I speak of God, because I am only human. I speak of God first: "God and I." That is the proper language for a human person to adopt. But Jesus did not hesitate to say, "I and my Father. . . ," placing Himself first. Why? Because that day He spoke out of the depth of His divine consciousness. He was speaking as God.

When we turn to Matthew 27:46, however, we find on the same lips a terrible cry that seems to stand in open opposition to what He formerly claimed. Jesus, as He was being crucified, cried out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" These two statements may appear to be hard to harmonize: "I and my Father are one," and "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" We must understand, however, that God did not desert or actually forsake the Lord Jesus Christ (John 16:32).

How do we know? Hebrews 9:14 says that Jesus "through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God." The Holy Ghost was resident in the body of Jesus until the breath left His body, never leaving Him until He had offered the full and satisfactory

sacrifice for our sins. He was not forsaken by God.

Why then did He cry out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" The answer is simple. Isaiah 59:2 says that sins and iniquities separate man and God. Until that moment on the tree, Jesus did not have sin. He was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sin. He did no sin, He knew no sin, and in Him was no sin. Until that moment He did not know what sin upon Him was, but at Calvary He became the sin-bearer. Our sins were placed upon Him, and He, because He was a man bearing sin, had to feel as any man feels under sin, that is, God-forsaken.

He was human enough to feel God-forsaken. He felt God-forsaken the moment that sin touched His mortal flesh, but actually He was not God-forsaken. He only felt that way because He was human. When Jesus said, "I and my Father are one," He spoke as God. When He said, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" He spoke as a man. He was man in a genuine sense, even to the extent of being able to feel God-forsaken under certain circumstances. The dual nature of the Lord Jesus Christ explains and even harmonizes what on the surface seems to be a contradiction.

We should further note that the typology of the meal offering, where the oil (Holy Spirit) was baked with the fine flour (Christ's humanity) indicates that Jesus was never actually God-forsaken at Calvary (brazen altar) (Leviticus 2:1-3).

Jesus Was More Than Two Thousand Years Old

John 8:56-58 provides possibly a clearer example of Christ's dual nature. After He said Abraham had seen His day, the Jews responded, "Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?" The Jews challenged Jesus about His age, saying, "Jesus, you are not yet fifty." He answered them, "Before Abraham was, I am."

Jesus declared that He was more than two thousand years of age, for Abraham predeceased Jesus by that amount of time.

Now, who was right, the Jews or Jesus? On the surface of it both could not be right—He was either "not fifty" or over two thousand. Which was right?

Both were. The Jews, for once, were right that day when they said that Jesus was not fifty years of age, because as to His humanity He was not. But Jesus was also right when He declared that He was older than Abraham, for He was speaking of His deity. As God, He was the great eternal Wonder; as man, when the Jews spoke to Him, He was not yet fifty years of age. We merely ask ourselves the question, Is He speaking as man or as God? Is He acting as man or as God? If we do this, then all the biblical testimony of Jesus will harmonize itself.

The Father Is in the Son

Our third example has probably been a difficulty to many. John 14:10 is another classic example of how a grasp of the dual nature of the Lord harmonizes apparently contradictory passages in the Bible concerning His person. There Jesus said, "Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me?"

We Oneness people have often been misrepresented here. We do not believe that the Father is the Son. But we *do* believe that the Father is *in* the Son. In John 14:9, Jesus said, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." Jesus claimed that the Father was in Him; therefore to see just Him was to see the Father.

But in John's Gospel we hear this same man (Jesus) who said the Father was *in* Him praying *to* His Father. "These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, . . . I pray for them" (John 17:1, 9). How are we going to harmonize that? Jesus distinctly said that the Father was in Him, yet He seemed to be praying *to* His Father in heaven. What are we going to do; how can we possibly believe both?

The answer again is quite simple. We said at the beginning, we established at the outset, that Jesus was genuinely human. We read in Psalm 65:2, "O thou that hearest prayer,

unto thee shall all flesh come." Now it does not say that unto God shall *some* flesh come or *most* flesh come, but it declares, "O thou that hearest prayer, unto thee shall *all* flesh come." Prayer was instituted not for the Creator, but for created beings. Jesus, according to Romans 9:5, was flesh; therefore He *had* to pray.

The second reason why He had to pray is shown in I Peter 2:21. Christ is not only our Savior, but He is also our example. What type of an example for Christian living would Jesus be if He had never prayed? We could live a prayerless life and justify ourselves if Jesus had never prayed. Upon the authority of Peter we could say that if Jesus never prayed and if He could still live the Christian life without praying, then so could we. An example must be an example in every aspect and in every detail; Jesus, being our example, had to pray. He prayed as man, and He prayed as our example.

We should note that the One who prayed as a man (Jesus), declared in John 14:13-14 that He is the One who hears and answers our prayers: "If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I [Jesus] will do it." Mystery of mysteries, the One who prayed as man answers prayers as God. The dual nature answers the difficulties every time.

Are Christ's Prayers an Embarrassment?

A dear trinitarian brother came to me one day and said, "Brother Magee, I think that is a great embarrassment to you Oneness people—that Jesus prayed."

I said, "You are wrong. But I want to tell you something: it is a great embarrassment to you."

He asked, "How would it be an embarrassment to *me*? I have never viewed it as such."

I replied, "What happened that night in the garden when Jesus prayed?"

"Oh," he answered, "it is simple. If you believe in the trinity, it is easy."

I asked him to make it easy for me.

"Well," he said, "Here is the second person praying to the first person. It is as simple as that."

I said, "Just a moment, please! Was the second person God?"

"Yes, certainly, the second person was God," he assured me.

"And was the first person God?" Again he assured me that the answer was in the affirmative.

Then I asked, "God prays to God?"

"Yes," was the firm reply.

I said, "Sir, if you pardon me for saying it, that exposition of yours, to my mind, is confusion twice confounded. Would you explain to me, please, how a divine person could pray in His divinity without undeifying Himself?"

If we ever hear someone praying, we know they need help, and God most assuredly does not need help. A divine person does not need help; only men need help. The trinitarian explanation of John 17—that we find one divine person praying to another divine person—is an absurdity.

We see in John 17 humanity praying to deity.

The trinitarian brother asked, "Then did not He pray to Himself?"

"No! He did not pray to Himself!"

"What did He do?"

I replied, "In His human nature He prayed to His divine nature."

"Well," he said, "that is praying to Himself!"

"You can have it that way; if Jesus were an ordinary person I would agree with you that that is praying to Himself. But Jesus was *not* ordinary—Jesus was extraordinary. Jesus was God *and* man!" If Jesus Christ had a dual nature why then should we think it incredible that He should perform a dual role?

There is a wrong way of saying the right thing. For example, I would not say that God died. No one could bring me to say that God died. For obvious reasons, God cannot die. But I do not hesitate to say that He who died was God. It is simply the right way of saying the right thing. Paul said to Timothy,

"Hold fast the form of sound words" (II Timothy 1:13). There is a certain form of sound language that cannot be condemned. Let us say the right thing the right way!

The Son's Lack of Knowledge

Here is another example of Christ's dual nature and role. "But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father" (Mark 13:32).

A Jehovah's Witness came to me one day and said, "Do you see this? The Son does not know the time of His own coming. He could not have been God."

I replied, "Sir, that does not stumble me any more than the verse in Luke's Gospel that says, 'Jesus increased in wisdom.' I will tell you why. Did you notice what we read a little while ago in Philippians 2:7: He 'took upon him the form of a servant'? He was not always a servant, but He took upon Himself, at His incarnation, a servant's form.

"I have never known what it is to have servants. However, I have a sort of an idea of how I would treat servants if I ever had them. I do not think that I would bring them into my study and bare to them the private things of the family. Would you treat a servant that way? If you ever do he will not be a servant for very long.

"Jesus said that this was so. 'For the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth' (John 15:15). Jesus took upon Himself the form of a servant. When Jesus said that He knew not the time of His return, He spoke as a servant. He knew not what His Lord did. Verses like that do not prove that He is not God—they prove that Jesus was human."

Jesus Knew All Things

What Jesus did not know as man, He knew as God; what He did not know as the Son, He knew as the Father. This is evident

when He questioned Peter in John 21, asking, "Peter, do you love Me?"

Peter answered, "Yes."

He asked the second time, "Peter, do you love Me?"

"Yes, Lord, You know I love You."

"Peter, do you love Me?"—the third time!

Poor Peter exclaimed, "Lord, You know all things! You know that I love you!"

As Lord, Jesus knew all things. It was only as the servant that He knew not all things.

Colossians 2 tells us that in Jesus are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge and that we are complete in Him. There is nothing that He does not know, that is, as God. But as man there are some things that He did not know.

If we will just bear in mind that Jesus was truly man and absolutely God, then we will have no difficulty about Jesus anywhere in the Holy Bible. Thank God I have a key in my hand. It has been several years since I received this truth about the oneness of the Godhead and Jesus Name baptism, and I am still thrilled!

Here is the key: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counseller, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace" (Isaiah 9:6). Isaiah, you are beside yourself! Just think what you have said. You are telling us that a child, born and wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger—that helpless, crying, sucking infant—is the mighty God! Do you mean it? You have told us that He is born a Son. You have also said that He is the Father of the ages, the Father of eternity, the everlasting Father. You are seeing two, are you not? A Son and a Father?

I am sure that Isaiah would say no. We all know that Isaiah believed in the high and lofty One who inhabited eternity. He did not believe in a high and lofty two neither a high and lofty three, but the high and lofty One who inhabits eternity. He declared that this One is the Son and is also the Father.

"The Son" Refers to the Flesh

What part of Jesus was the Son? The angel told Mary, "That holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God" (Luke 1:35). Paul wrote, "God sent forth his Son, made of a woman" (Galatians 4:4). The Son is the flesh or humanity. The Father is the great eternal Spirit who indwelt the Son, and thus the great mystery is solved.

Joseph was not the father of Jesus. He was the reputed father only. It was the eternal Spirit who performed the miracle act of paternity upon the virgin womb. The Holy Ghost was a Father to Jesus, and that Holy Ghost (the eternal God who fathered Him) indwelt Him. That is why He could say, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." There were not two persons but two natures—human and divine, Son and Father—all in Jesus Christ.

The mystery of godliness is God making Himself man. The Bible speaks of another mystery that is entirely opposite in nature—the mystery of iniquity. The mystery of iniquity is man making himself God. Mark well the following words: If this generation does not accept the truth of the mystery of godliness, it will be compelled to accept the mystery of iniquity. Let us rejoice in the great truth that God came in the flesh as Jesus Christ.

2
The Full-Orbed Deity of Jesus Christ

Jesus Is the Father

Plain Statements

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called . . . The everlasting Father" (Isaiah 9:6).

"He that hath seen me hath seen the Father" (John 14:9).

"I and my Father are one" (John 10:30).

Verses to Compare

1. Who raised Jesus from the dead?
   John 2:19-22 says Jesus; Romans 6:4 says the Father.
2. Who answers prayer?
   John 14:14 says Jesus; John 15:16 says the Father.
3. Who has the drawing power?
   John 12:32 says Jesus; John 6:44 says the Father.
4. Who is the Alpha and Omega?
   Revelation 1:8 says Jesus; Revelation 21:6-7 says the Father.
5. Who is the coming One?
   John 14:3 says Jesus; I John 3:1-2 says the Father.

Surely we cannot think that two persons raised Jesus from the dead, that two persons answer prayer, that two persons draw us to God, that two persons are the Alpha and Omega, and that two persons are coming.

Christ's Truthful Claims

Jesus claimed that He was the resurrection, the answerer of prayer, the drawing power, the Alpha and Omega, and the coming One. Did He claim too much? We say no, for Jesus is the Father.

1. Christ is a Father to His children (Hebrews 2:13; John 1:12-13).
2. Christ is the Father of eternity (Isaiah 9:6, see margin).
3. Christ is the Father to the church (Isaiah 53:10).
4. Christ is the Father to overcomers (Revelation 21:7).
5. Christ is the Father of creation (John 1:3).
6. Christ is the Father to Israel, "his people" (Matthew 1:21).
7. Christ is the Father of lights (James 1:17; John 9:5).
8. Christ is the Father of spirits (Hebrews 12:9; John 1:3).

If we deny the Fatherhood of Jesus, then we deny that He is God for "there is but one God, the Father" (I Corinthians 8:6; Ephesians 4:6; John 4:21-24).

Jesus Is the Son

In the scriptural passages relative to the Son two thoughts come prominently into view: (1) manhood or humanity and (2) time. For example:

In Hebrews 5:8 the Son learned.
In John 17 the Son prayed.
In I John 4:14 and John 13:16 the Son was sent.
In Mark 13:32 the Son did not know all things.
In John 14:28 the Son was not as great as the Father.
In I John 1:7 the Son had blood.
In Galatians 2:20-21 the Son died!

All this clearly shows that as Son Jesus was man. The angel clearly said so to Mary. "That holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God" (Luke 1:35). "His Son, made of a woman" (Galatians 4:4).

The Term "Eternal Son" Is A Trinitarian Invention

The term "eternal Son" is never found in the Bible, and thank God it is not! If it was, it would teach Jesus as Son forever, praying, learning, being lesser, "not knowing," and so on. For all these things are in the Scripture associated with the Son. Indeed, the Bible flatly and plainly contradicts the "eternal Son" idea in John 3:16 and everywhere it mentions the "begotten Son." The words *eternal* and *begotten* are contradictory and mean completely opposite things. Hebrews 1:5-6 tells us the very day in which the Son was begotten; how then can men speak of the "eternal Son"? Furthermore, the Bible tells us when the Sonship role will cease! (I Corinthians 15:28).

We do believe in the eternality of He who came as the Son. However He is not eternal as the Son, which term relates to what He is in time and as to His humanity.

Threefold Purpose of the Sonship

1. Redemption (Hebrews 2:14; Galatians 2:20).
2. Mediation (Hebrews 7:3; 10:12).
3. Millennial reign and judgment (Matthew 26:64; Acts 17:31; John 5:22).

Jesus Is the Holy Spirit

Verses to Compare

1. There is one Spirit (Ephesians 4:4).
2. There is but one Lord, Jesus Christ (I Corinthians 8:6, NIV).

3. "Now the Lord [Jesus is the one Lord] is the Spirit" (II Corinthians 3:17, NIV).

The Titles of the Spirit Reveal that He is Jesus (in Emanation)

The Spirit of His Son (Galatians 4:6).
The Spirit of Jesus (Acts 16:7, NIV).
The Spirit of Jesus Christ (Philippians 1:19).

Two Spirits?

Do trinitarians imagine that there are two Spirits in the Godhead, namely, the Father, the so-called first person, who is termed a Spirit (John 4:24), and the Holy Spirit, the so-called third person? There are not two Spirits in the Godhead because "there is . . . one Spirit" (Ephesians 4:4).

In the answer to these questions lies the truth.

1. Who is the abiding One?
   Matthew 28:20 says Jesus; John 14:16 says the Spirit.
2. Who makes intercession?
   Hebrews 4:15 and 7:25 say Jesus; Romans 8:26 says the Spirit.
3. Who is the Paraclete?
   I John 2:1 says Jesus (see margin); John 14:26 says the Spirit.
4. Who is the speaker in Revelation 2-3?
   Revelation 1:8-12 and 22:16 say Jesus; Revelation 2:7 says the Spirit.

Do we have two abiding ones, two intercessors, two Paracletes, and two speakers giving the messages to the seven churches? The answer every time is in the negative.

Jesus is the Spirit. Let us read John 14:18 carefully: "I [Jesus] will not leave you comfortless [margin, "orphans"]: I

will come to you." If this is not Jesus the Son promising to come as the Spirit in order to be a Father to the apostles then what does it mean?

Did Christ Have Two Fathers?

A classic example of the confusion of thought implicit in trinitarian belief is seen when, under questioning, they are obliged to confess that Christ must have had two fathers, namely, the first person of the trinity (they say), to whom He prayed, and the Holy Spirit, who performed the miracle act of paternity in the virgin womb (Luke 1:35).

Are Christ and the Spirit Two Persons?

Colossians 2:9 says, "In him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." Jesus must be the Holy Ghost.

John 20:22 says, "He breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost." In the day that we can establish a difference of person between ourselves and our breath then we may succeed in proving a difference of person between Jesus and the Holy Ghost.

Colossians 1:27 says, "Christ in you, the hope of glory." Who indwells the believer? The Holy Ghost. Paul calls Him Christ.

The Personality of the Spirit

All this will serve to expose the untruthfulness of those who say that we deny the personality of the Spirit. Think a moment! How could we if we believe the Spirit is Jesus? "O consistency, thou art a jewel."

Unanswerable Difficulties of Trinitarianism

1. God was in Christ.

"God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself"

(II Corinthians 5:19). We are reconciled by the death of Christ to the deity resident in Jesus. If, as trinitarians say, Jesus is but the incarnation of one of three divine persons, then according to this verse we are not reconciled to the Father and the Spirit.

2. Something two divine persons don't know!

Mark 13:32 and Matthew 24:36 say that the Son does not know the day or hour of His second advent, but only the Father does. According to trinitarianism, there are three omniscient persons in the Godhead. How then does only one divine person (the Father) know the time of the advent?

3. Trinitarianism requires three Calvarys.

Trinitarians believe that three divine persons made the new covenant and the old. The law of the covenant required that the covenant maker die in order to put the covenant in force. (See Hebrews 8:7-13; 9:16-17.) Consistent and logical trinitarianism would require the death of three divine persons, therefore, in order to bring in the new covenant. Oneness believers have no such difficulty, as they believe that He who died was in the fullest sense Jehovah God, the covenant maker.

4. Whom shall we worship?

In John 4:21-24, Jesus taught that the sole object of worship is the Father. Can our trinitarian friends explain why Christ denied worship to the other two divine persons? Once again, Oneness believers have no difficulty. Jesus did not believe the trinity; to Him Father, Son, and Holy Ghost were one person.

The Great Key

The key to an understanding of the Godhead teaching is the dual nature of Jesus. Jesus was:

A man (John 8:40)—and also God (John 20:28; I Corinthians 8:6).

Not fifty years old (John 8:57)—and also eternal (Micah 5:2).

A babe (Luke 2:16)—and also the mighty God (Isaiah 9:6).

Learning (Hebrews 5:8)—and also knew all things (John 21:17).

Weak and weary (II Corinthians 13:4; John 4:6)—and also the Almighty (Revelation 1:8).

On earth (Mark 2:10)—and also in heaven (John 3:13).

The Son (Isaiah 9:6)—and also the Father (Isaiah 9:6).

One who prayed (Luke 22:41)—and also the One who answers prayer (John 14:14).

These verses of Scriptures do not present two divine persons but rather two natures—human and divine.

The Apostles Were Oneness

This is how the apostles spoke of Jesus:

"The great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ" (Titus 2:13).

"The Almighty" (Revelation 1:8).

"Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life" (I John 5:20).

"The only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ" (Jude 1:4).

"Our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory," and "There is one God" (James 2:1, 19).

"Jesus Christ . . . the King . . . the only wise God" (I Timothy 1:16-17).

The present resurgence of the truth of the full deity of Jesus is but a rediscovery of a very precious apostolic truth that for long centuries has been obscured by apostasy and a tritheistic theory.

3

The Begotten Sonship of Jesus Christ

One of the greatest objections leveled against the truth of the one God is that implicit in our teaching is a denial of the eternal Sonship of the Lord Jesus Christ. Trinitarians say, "You do not believe, Brother Magee, that there are three persons in God?" I assure them that they understand me perfectly. I do not believe in what the hymn writer has written: "God in three Persons, blessed Trinity," I substitute: "God in Christ Jesus, blessed Unity."

Trinitarians say, "You cannot therefore believe in the eternal Father, the eternal Son, and the eternal Spirit?"

I do believe in the eternal Spirit because the Bible distinctly speaks of the eternal Spirit. Jesus offered Himself without spot to God through the eternal Spirit (Hebrews 9:14). But I cannot find in Scripture the expression "the eternal Son." However, often I find in the Bible an expression which is in direct contradiction to the theological term "eternal Son"—namely, "begotten Son." In John 3:16 we read, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

The two words *eternal* and *begotten* are in direct contradiction to each other. If someone is eternal he has never

been begotten. If he has been begotten then he is not eternal. Two things cannot be true of Jesus as the Son. He cannot at the same time be the "eternal Son" and the "begotten Son." Now which are we to believe? Let us believe what the Bible says. It states that Jesus is the "begotten Son." It never says that He is the "eternal Son."

The Humanity of Jesus

The Sonship began at Bethlehem. The Incarnation was the time when the Sonship began. The angel, in Luke 1:35, said to the virgin mother-to-be, "That holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." Here it is clearly revealed that the humanity of the Lord Jesus is the Son. "That holy thing"—that physical, fleshly one—is the Son. In Galatians 4:4 we find this truth stated in different words: "But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law." Is not that clear? The Son was made of a woman.

Hebrews 1:5-6 pinpoints the very day in which Christ was begotten as to His Sonship: "For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? . . . When he bringeth in the firstbegotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him." In other words, Jesus was begotten and then brought into the world on the day that the angels of God worshiped Him in the sky over Judea. The shepherds were startled as they listened to the heavenly choir. The angels bade them not to be afraid, for there was that day born in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. Hebrews 1:5-6 tells us that was the day in which Jesus was begotten and born as a Son.

We also understand that by the resurrection, in a certain sense, He was also begotten, inasmuch as He was begotten (or born) from the dead (Revelation 1:5). When we speak of the begotten Sonship of the Lord Jesus Christ then, we think of two events—His birth and His resurrection. In His birth He was begotten; in His resurrection He was begotten again.

A Denial of the Eternal Sonship

I was chatting one day with a staunch trinitarian. I could see that he was genuinely appalled that I should ever deny the eternal Sonship.

I said to him, "We will take our concordance and look up the verses speaking of Christ as Son. I think that will be all we will have to do, because you will find that in those verses there is always the thought of inferiority and subordination, humanity and time."

We turned to Luke 12:10: "And whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but unto him that blasphemeth against the Holy Ghost it shall not be forgiven." Here Jesus said that if we blasphemed against the Son it would be forgiven us. But He further declared that if we blasphemed against the Holy Ghost it will not be forgiven. Now I do not propose to explain that verse—that is not in the scope of this booklet—but the very fact that people can blaspheme the Son and be pardoned and yet when they blaspheme the Spirit it is unpardonable—that very fact infers inferiority on the part of the Son.

Another verse of similar nature is Mark 13:32. Speaking of His own second coming, Jesus said, "Of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father." Jesus declared that as the Son He did not know the time of His own coming. But He said the Father knew what the Son did not. Without going into the verse to expound it, let us notice that there were certain things of which the Son was ignorant, again teaching subordination on the part of the Son.

In John 14:28 Jesus plainly said, "My Father is greater than I." That is, the Father is greater than the Son.

In I John 4:14 we read, "The Father sent the Son" and in John 13:16, "Neither [is] he that is sent greater than he that sent him." When we couple these two verses, again we are impressed with the thought that every time the Scripture

mentions the Son it shows Him in a subordinate and inferior light.

According to Hebrews 5:8, the Son learned obedience. The very fact the Son had to learn casts Him in an inferior role.

The Supreme Reason for this Denial

I said to my friend, "I want to tell you the supreme reason why I do not believe in the eternal Sonship of the Lord Jesus Christ. If I believed in it I would eternally humiliate Jesus Christ! Since all the verses speaking of the Son put Him in a subordinate and inferior condition, if I were to believe He would eternally be in the role of the Son, I would eternally humiliate the Lord Jesus Christ. I will never do that." I am interested in any teaching that eternally exalts the Lord Jesus.

My trinitarian friend continued the conversation by saying, "Let us see where we are now. You believe that Sonship implies subordination. Of course, it always does; the very word son does. You also believe that Jesus became the Son or accepted a subordinate position or condition at Bethlehem?"

"Precisely," I replied.

"Will you kindly explain to me," he asked, "how it is that we find the Son mentioned in the Old Testament? If Jesus did not exist as the Son prior to Bethlehem, how is it that in the Old Testament we find mention of the Son?"

"That is very easily answered," I assured him. "We find mention of the Son, for example, in Psalm 2:7-8: 'Thou art my Son: this day have I begotten thee.' Verse 12 says, 'Kiss the Son, lest he be angry.' You will notice that the holy psalm is a prophecy. It is a prophecy concerning the Messiah, placing Him in the golden age of prophecy when Jesus will be here ruling and reigning as the Son. We know the Old Testament speaks of the Son, but always prophetically, not as Christ being the Son at the time. Christ was not the Son in the Old Testament dispensation. He became the Son in the New Testament dispensation."

Prophetical References

I continued, "In Proverbs 30:4 we find another reference to the Son: 'What is his name, and what is his son's name, if thou canst tell?' Now verse 1 tells us that this was a prophecy of Agur. He was speaking of things that were not as yet. Jesus was not the Son then, but Agur prophetically asked the question, looking over into another time and era when Jesus would have taken upon Himself Sonship. Although the Son is mentioned in Old Testament passages, they do not prove that Christ was the Son in the Old Testament. They are prophetical references to His coming Sonship."

The trinitarian said, "Brother Magee, that may be true, but I do read of the Father in the Old Testament. Now that is all I need to find. If I can find the Father in the Old Testament then He must have had a Son. No man is a father until he has had an offspring, be it a son or a daughter. So if I can locate the Father in the Old Testament it will prove that He must have had a Son in the Old Testament. Answer that!"

"Now," I replied, "the Old Testament does refer to Jehovah as the Father. But in what connection? Was it relative to Christ? Seldom! Jehovah is mentioned as the Father in Jeremiah 31:9. If you read it carefully He is the Father of Israel, not the Father of the Son. Jehovah was the national Father of the Israelite people in the Old Testament. He is spoken of as the Father, not relative to Christ but rather relative to Israel. In Malachi 2:10 He is also called the Father, but in a creative sense: 'Have we not all one father? hath not one God created us?' In that sense God was a Father in the Old Testament—He was the Father of all His created human beings.

"There is only one plain reference in the Old Testament where God is called a Father relative to the Son. That is Isaiah 9:6: 'For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counseller, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.' This again is a prophecy.

It is a prophecy of the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ. Here Isaiah says Jesus is the Father. Does not this deal a deathblow to the theory that the Son is a person eternally distinct from the Father?"

The Pre-existence of Jesus

Some argue that Christ was a Son before Bethlehem because "The Father sent the Son." But John 1:6 says, "There was a man sent from God, whose name was John." By the same reasoning we would be justified in saying that John was man before his birth, which is absurd! Others use the word *gave*, as in John 3:16, to prove that Christ was the Son before God gave Him to us. But Joseph spoke of the sons God had given him (Genesis 48:9). Were Joseph's children sons before they were born? The truth is that Christ was sent as a man in maturity and not as a child in infancy (John 20:21; Isaiah 61:1; Matthew 21:37).

If the Bible teaches Christ existing as Son prior to Bethlehem then surely it would not be hard to find the Son in existence in the Old Testament, and yet this is something trinitarians have never succeeded in doing. Yes, the Son is mentioned in the Old Testament, but never as being then in existence. He is prophesied of as coming, which He did at Bethlehem.

We do believe in the pre-existence of the Lord Jesus Christ. The difficulty many people have in understanding us is this: When we say that Jesus is not the eternal Son, they jump to the conclusion that we are denying His pre-existence. But we would never dream of denying the pre-existence of Jesus Christ.

I heard of two men who were discussing this very matter. One man believed that Jesus had His entire origination at Bethlehem. The other believed nothing of the sort. He believed that Jesus was pre-existent from all eternity. They met together in a verbal clash. The man who denied the pre-existence of Jesus prior to Bethlehem held strongly to his point. They had almost exhausted themselves when it seemed that the believer in the

pre-existence of Jesus received a little flash of inspiration. He said to the disbeliever, "Have you ever read II Corinthians 8:9?"

"Yes," was the reply.

"Let me quote it to you," said the believer. "'For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.'

"Well," the believer continued, "I want you to answer me something. If Jesus did not pre-exist in splendor and great glory long before Bethlehem, would you kindly tell me at what time He was rich? He was not rich at His birth; He was born in a manger. He was not rich in His life; He Himself said, 'Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head' (Luke 9:58). He was not rich in His death; they could only give Him a borrowed tomb. He was not rich at any time during His thirty-three and one-half years of earthly ministry. Now, tell me, if you do not believe in His pre-existence, at what time was Jesus Christ rich?"

This opponent had met the truth and could not reply.

We must conclude that Jesus must have been rich before His earthly sojourn, for He was not rich here.

We certainly believe in the pre-existence of the Lord Jesus Christ. There never was a time when He did not exist. We believe that He is the bread that came down out of heaven. We believe that, although as to His humanity He was not fifty years of age, yet He was older than Abraham. We believe that He came forth from Bethlehem, but that He had many goings forth from of old, from the days of eternity. There is no mistake about it; we stand foursquare on the truth of the eternality of the Lord Jesus Christ!

But we do not believe that He is the eternal Son. We believe that He was and is the eternal God! He who was the eternal God became the Son and accepted voluntarily as to His flesh and as to His humanity, which was the Sonship part of Him, an inferior and subordinate position relative to His essential deity. This explains Jesus to us.

When the millennium is completed, the Sonship ministry will be finished. When He has accomplished redemption, which He has; when He has accomplished mediation, which He is now in the process of doing; when He returns as man and rules as the Son for a thousand years; and when the thousand years are expired, the Sonship ministry of Jesus Christ will have been climaxed, completed, and fulfilled. Very reverently I say that it will have become obsolete (I Corinthians 15:24-28).

There is a begotten Sonship taught in the Word of God. But it knows nothing of the so-called eternal Sonship. I am glad that it does not. I do not want Him to be eternally known as the subject Son. I want Him to be eternally known as the mighty God!

4

Jesus is the Fulness of the Godhead

In this section we will briefly answer some common objections to the scriptural teaching that all the fullness of the Godhead dwells in Jesus Christ.

"Let Us Make Man In Our Image" (Genesis 1:26)

Trinitarians argue that this verse shows a trinity of divine persons, but the verse immediately following says, "God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him." We should note the use of the singular personal pronouns. John 1:3, 10 makes it clear that creation was the work of one divine person. "The world was made by him" [Jesus]. Isaiah 44:24 is crystal clear on this point. God speaks in the first person and says, "I am the LORD . . . that spreadeth abroad the earth by myself." Could language be plainer? Creation is the work of one divine person only. (See also James 2:19; Malachi 2:10.)

Angels were present when God made the world (Job 38:7), and they applauded His creative acts. Jehovah converses with angels (Psalm 103:20). The Jews have always believed that the "us" of Genesis 1:26 refers to God and the angels. Man is certainly made in the likeness of angels (Hebrews 2:7). Indeed

when angels appeared in Bible times they were often simply called men (Acts 1:10).

A careful study of Genesis 3:22-24, where the "us" again appears, reveals that God is addressing the cherubim or elect angels who, together with Himself, "know good and evil."

"Us," relative to God and the angels, is seen again in Genesis 11:7, where God indicates to the angels that Babel's hour of judgment had come: "Let us go down, and there confound their language." As at Sodom, God, in conjunction with the angels, executed the work of vengeance (Genesis 18:33; 19:1).

Isaiah 6:1-8 is crystal clear concerning the identity of the "us." It is God and the seraphim. Angels cannot preach the gospel (see Acts 10:1-8), but they are deeply interested in its propagation (I Peter 1:12). A true gospel preacher speaks for Jehovah and all His angels.

We do not say that angels helped at creation. In humility the great God of heaven revealed to them His intentions. Some people see a major objection to all this in Isaiah 40:12-13. Let them read the passage carefully, for it does not clash with our proposition. It does not say that God refuses to counsel with angels—it simply states that no one, as His counselor, teaches or instructs the Almighty. God does counsel with angels. He even counsels with men. He counseled with Abraham about Sodom (Genesis 18:17) and not only counseled but permitted Abraham to actually bargain with Him. Nevertheless, neither Abraham nor the angels ever taught God anything.

"The Word Was With God" (John 1:1)

A dear brother quoted this verse to me to prove that Jesus the Word was a distinct divine person from the Father. I asked him, "Who is your God?" He answered, "The trinity."

I said, "Let us read the verse in the light of your answer—'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with the trinity, and the Word was the trinity.'"

"Oh!" he cried, "in that verse God stands for the Father."

"All right," I replied. "Let us read it again—'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with the Father, and the Word was the Father.'"

He could say no more. The meaning of the verse became clear to him, and it is this—the Word was God. Any idea that the Word was a distinct personality from God is destroyed by John when he emphatically declared, "And the Word was God." I know of no stronger Oneness verse in the whole Bible. How can we make a difference of person between God and His Word?

Elohim

The Hebrew word *Elohim is* translated "God" in our Bibles. It indicates a plurality of attributes and not of persons. Baal (Judges 6:31) and Baalzebub (II Kings 1:2) are called Elohim but they were not trinities. Great Bible teachers such as Calvin have ridiculed the notion that this word affords any support for a belief in a plurality of divine persons.

Elohim is applied to Christ, thus proving that it does not mean a plurality of persons. A few examples will suffice: Elohim was sold for thirty pieces of silver (Zechariah 11:4, 12, 13); Elohim was pierced at Calvary (Zechariah 12:10); Elohim is coming back as King (Zechariah 14:5). Do we think that three persons were betrayed, crucified, and are coming again? Of course not! The very use of the word *Elohim* in Scripture proves that by it the sacred writers did not mean three divine persons but rather our one Lord Jesus Christ, who has all the attributes of full-orbed deity.

Jordan's Banks (Matthew 3:13-17)

Some imagine that a trinity of divine persons is taught in this passage. Actually, this is just the result of wishful thinking. Let us bear in mind that what happened at the baptism of Jesus

was not arranged to teach the people any particular doctrine of the Godhead. As a matter of fact, apparently no one by Jordan's banks that day heard or saw anything concerning the voice or the dove save John the Baptist. It was a private and infallible sign to John whereby he could identify the Messiah (John 1:33).

Moreover, the dove alighting upon Jesus was purely symbolical. Some people say that Jesus received the Holy Ghost at Jordan. How wrong they are! There never was a time when Jesus did not have the Holy Ghost and that without measure. John the Baptist was full of the Holy Ghost from his mother's womb. Dare we say less for Jesus?

Trinitarians say that the voice heard at Jordan's banks demands personality. Did the voice emanating from Balaam's donkey indicate personality (Numbers 22:28)? Jesus said that if people ceased to praise Him, the stones would cry out (Luke 19:40). Would we then understand the rocks to have personality? The truth is that the man who was baptized by John was also the omnipresent God, and He was responsible for the voice. Jesus claimed to be on earth and in heaven at the same time (John 3:13; 1:18). He also claimed while still on earth as to His body that He was present as God in the midst of every believing company that met in His name the wide world over (Matthew 18:20). Jesus, who was that day baptized in the river, was omnipresent—everywhere present at once—as to His Spirit. If we deny that He as to His divinity was responsible for the voice then we virtually deny Him the attribute of omnipresence.

John 14:10 settles the issue. Jesus claimed that all miraculous works attending His ministry (and that includes the voice and the sign of the dove) were attributable to One who dwelt within Him: "The Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works."

"My God, My God, Why Hast Thou Forsaken Me?" (Matthew 27:46)

Trinitarians should carefully consider the logical conclusions of their objections before making them. If Jesus was ac-

tually forsaken by God then He is not God. The trinitarian explanation of this verse, namely, that here we see one divine person forsaking another, compels us to ask where then is their professed belief in the unity of the Godhead? If the divine persons of the trinity theory are so distinct as to be able to forsake each other, then how can trinitarians with any degree of logic or consistency deny that they really believe in three Gods?

Jesus was *not* forsaken by God; He could not be, for He was God manifested in flesh (I Timothy 3:16). Jesus claimed that His Father would not forsake Him in the hour of crisis (John 16:32). Hebrews 9:14 teaches that the Holy Spirit was resident in Jesus right up until the very last moment, until the offering was completed. The truth is that Jesus *felt* God-forsaken. He had to, because He was the sinner's substitute and this was part of the price He had to pay.

In Leviticus 2:1-3, the fine flour represents our Lord's humanity, the oil mixed with the fine flour speaks of God in the body of Jesus Christ, and the frankincense indicates intercession. The flour, the oil and the frankincense were together baked by fire on the altar, which speaks of Calvary. This is a lovely picture of how the great Spirit God was resident in Christ even when the flames of divine retribution engulfed His soul at Calvary. Jesus was not *actually* God-forsaken at Calvary but *felt* the awful reality of a God-forsaken soul as He stood in the sinner's stead.

"The Glory Which I Had With Thee Before The World Was" (John 17:5)

Trinitarians allege that this verse and its context reveal that Christ was the Son before the world was. If this were true, then it would violently contradict all the passages in Scripture which teach that the Sonship of our Lord Jesus Christ relates to time and humanity. The true explanation of this verse is simple. Jesus was praying for glorification, which was at that time still

future (John 7:39; I Timothy 3:16). Indeed, the crucifixion, resurrection, ascension and glorification were all still future when Jesus prayed in John 17. Our Lord indicated in His prayer that in some sense He actually had been glorified in eternity past. What did our Lord mean? He meant that He had been glorified in eternity past just as He had been crucified in eternity past. (See Revelation 13:8.) Everything relative to Christ's redemptive work happened in eternity past in the mind of God.

In God's mind, long before the earth was made Jesus was born of a virgin, lived a sinless life, died a vicarious death, had a triumphant resurrection, had a wonderful ascension, and was received up into glory. Our God inhabits eternity and sees the things that are not as though they were. Ephesians 1:4 makes it clear that also before the world was made the church was chosen and purified in Christ. God saw us before Him in love, and yet we did not even exist!

Oneness theologians understand that John 17:5 refers to the ideal existence of the Son before the foundation of the world, or His existence in God's mind and thought. Obviously the Son did not actually exist before Bethlehem, else we should have no difficulty locating Him as being actually present in the Old Testament and the period it covered. There is not one verse in the Old Testament that shows the Son as being then present. He is certainly prophesied of in the Old Testament. Always, the Son is the coming One and not the present One. How could the Son have existed in the Old Testament as such when He was made of a woman centuries later? (Galatians 4:4). Examples of ideal pre-existence are found in other parts of the Bible. (See Romans 4:17 and Jeremiah 1:5.)

New Testament Plurals (John 14:23)

Trinitarians emphasize the words *we* and *our* in this and similar verses and argue that those words reveal a plurality of divine persons. I can well remember asking a trinitarian

preacher to explain the verse to me: "We will come unto him, and make our abode with him." He could not even begin to expound its meaning, for even he, as a trinitarian, could not believe that he had three divine persons abiding in him. There is only one way to have God abiding in us and that is by the Spirit, and Ephesians 4:4 says there is "one Spirit:"

The meaning of John 14:23 is very beautiful and clear to those who have the Oneness key. Matthew 10:20 speaks of the Spirit of the Father, and Galatians 4:6 speaks of the Spirit of the Son, yet there are not two Spirits but one (Ephesians 4:4). The Spirit of the Father is the Spirit of almightiness, the Spirit of power (John 14:10). The Spirit of the Son is the Spirit of priestliness, or the Spirit of obedience and prayer (Galatians 4:6; John 17:1; Hebrews 5:8). The believer has both aspects in the Holy Ghost. Anything about a believer that speaks of the miraculous or almightiness is (the Spirit of) the Father abiding in him, and anything about a believer that speaks of prayer, submission, obedience or priestliness is (the Spirit of) the Son abiding in him, yet there is but one Spirit in two aspects.

Oneness can interpret John 14:23 and every other "plural" verse, but trinitarianism can offer no explanation. Let us never forget that Jesus had a dual nature and so performed a dual role. When one meditates upon this great fact, he will readily see that Jesus requires plurals to fully describe His offices and operations. That the plurals do not indicate persons but rather offices in the one person is clearly shown by John 12:45: "And he that seeth me seeth him that sent me."

In this respect a study of Isaiah 53 is very rewarding. Verse 6 mentions "the LORD" in contradistinction to "him" (Christ). Verse 10 reads, "It pleased the LORD to bruise him . . . [and] make his soul an offering for sin." The Lord thus appears as the offerer and Christ as the lamb (verse 7), the offered One. Yet who does not know that Jesus is the great high priest, the great offerer, and who does not know that at the same time He is the great offering and lamb? The wonderful truth of Isaiah 53 is that Christ, the God-man, is the One who bruised and was

bruised, who offered and was offered, who was both high priest and lamb at Calvary. Superficially, some may see two persons in Isaiah 53, but those who know that truth about Jesus' dual nature and role can see that the prophet spoke not of two divine persons but of the offices of our God and Savior, Jesus Christ.

"How Many Did Stephen See?" (Acts 7:54-60)

Stephen did not say, "I see Jesus and God." He knew better than that, for "no man [and that includes Stephen] hath seen God at any time" (John 1:18; I John 4:12). God is invisible (Colossians 1:15; I Timothy 1:17; Hebrews 11:27), and it is impossible to see anything that is invisible! Because God is invisible, "no man hath seen, nor can see" him (I Timothy 6:16). The instances in the Old Testament where people claimed to have seen God are to be understood as theophanies or temporary materializations of God in angelic form.

In this dispensation, Jesus is the image of the invisible God; indeed Jesus is the express image of the invisible God (Colossians 1:15; Hebrews 1:3). At Bethlehem God assumed human form, and that human form called the Son is God's perfect, complete and permanent incarnation. This explains why the theophanies of the old dispensations ceased at Bethlehem. Since Jesus is God's express image, and since "in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily" (Colossians 2:9), it is impossible for God to reveal His person outside of or apart from Jesus. Stephen therefore did not see and could not have seen two persons.

What then is meant by the expression "the right hand of God"? According to Exodus 15:6, Moses and the Israelites on the safe side of the Red Sea claimed to have seen "the right hand of God" when the waters fell in upon the Egyptians and they were drowned. What did they actually see? Nothing but a tremendous manifestation of God's power and glory. This they called "the right hand of God." Stephen was an Israelite and

knew the Hebrew Scriptures. When he used the expression "the right hand of God" he meant exactly what Moses meant when he used the same phrase. Stephen claimed to see Jesus in the place of glory and power and described this as "the right hand of God" (Acts 7:55).

We should note that after receiving the vision Stephen still believed that Jesus was God. He called upon God and said, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit" (Acts 7:59). Only God the Father receives the spirits of men in death (Psalm 31:5; Ecclesiastes 12:7; Hebrews 12:9). Stephen knew that too and yet said, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." Stephen believed that Jesus was God and the Father veiled in flesh. If, as trinitarians affirm, Stephen saw two, then God is not invisible, God has been seen, Jesus is not the express image of God but simply *an* image (all of which contradict the Scriptures), and Stephen committed his spirit to the wrong member of the trinity!

"Stand Up, Stand Up, For Jesus!"

Dear reader, you have now come to the end of this little book. Before you close it and lay it down, let me make the issue clear. This is not just an argument between theologians. This is a matter of Christ. "What think ye of Christ?" (Matthew 22:42). Do you say He is God, fully God, truly God, wholly God, solely God, altogether God, and exclusively God? Or do you think, as so many do, that He is but the second person of a trinity? Remember, if Jesus is the fullness of the Godhead and you persist in worshiping two others you break the Scripture, in which the one God says, "There is no God else beside me" (Isaiah 45:21). Remember, if Jesus is full-orbed deity and you regard Him as being one-third of God when you worship then you cannot be truthfully called a worshiper of God. Why not take your stand with those who believe that Christ is all? He is the Father as to His deity, the Son as to His humanity, and the Holy Spirit in emanation. In a coming day, everybody everywhere will believe nothing else (Zechariah 14:9). Man-made traditions say

that Jesus is in the Godhead. The Scripture of truth says that the Godhead is in Jesus (Colossians 2:9). Which will you believe?